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ABSTRACT

Attempts to develop an appreciation of the first-line supervisor's job and his responsibilities to management, to his worker-subordinates, to his peers, and to himself are presented. In particular this document studies the making of decisions, and discusses do's and dont's of face-to-face problem-solving with a subordinate. A movie film brings out typical decision-making defects of supervisors and shows how these defects can hinder their job performance and jeopardize chances for promotion. (Author/NF)

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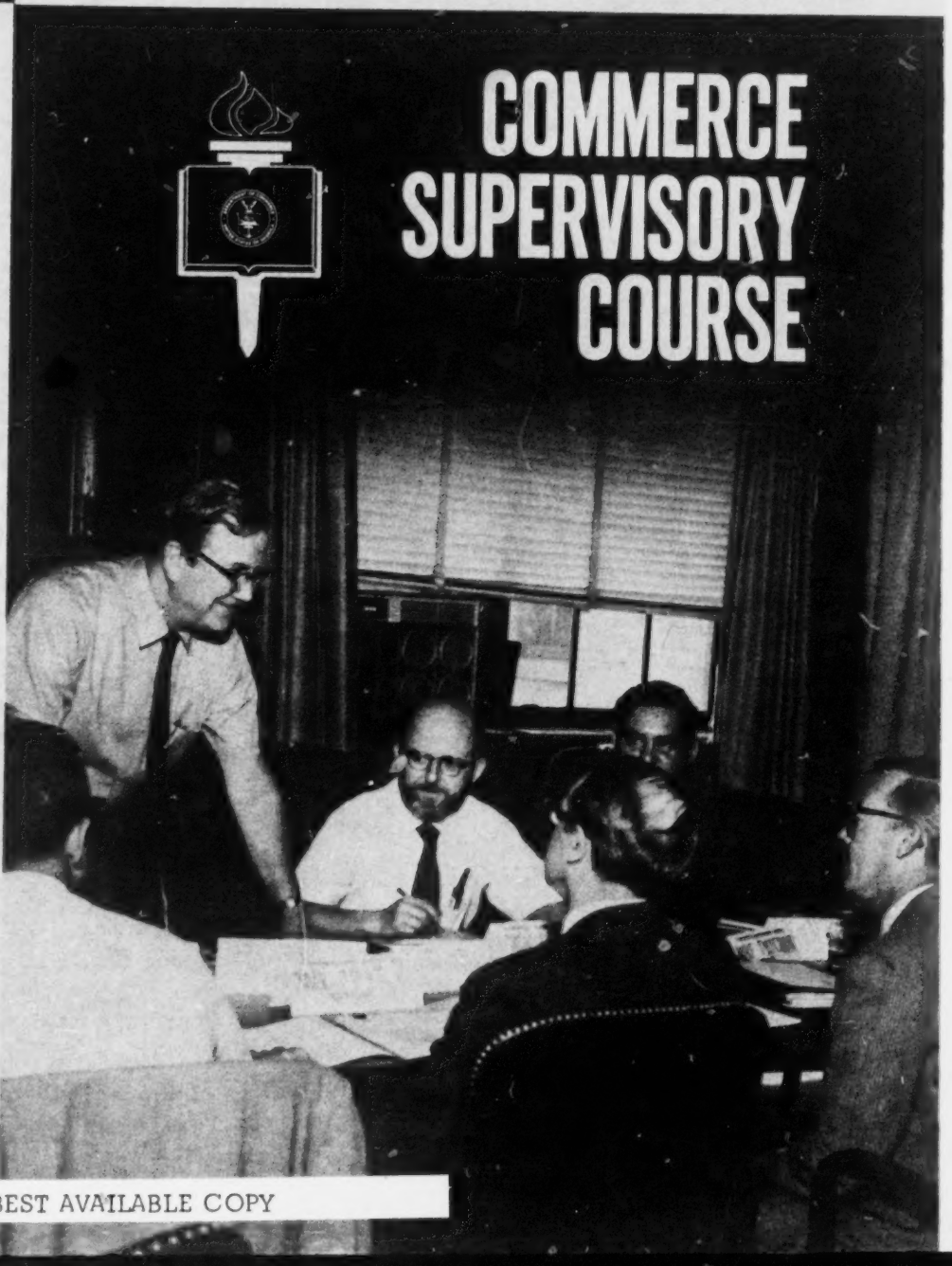
# DISCUSSION GUIDE

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR NO. I-2-4

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# ABOUT THE DISCUSSION GUIDES

The study of supervisory processes and practices has been going on for many, many years, and practical knowledge of experience based supervisory activities continues to increase. These discussion guides provide ideas, concepts, and approaches to the supervisory function that capture the experience of successful supervisors in the Federal Government.

These guides, covering the major processes of the Government supervisor, are in response to the need for basic supervisory training materials that can be used in the instruction and training of supervisors throughout the U.S. Department of Commerce.

Each discussion guide may be used separately or in concert with other guides. Latitude is provided in the design to tailor the subject matter to the needs of the respective bureaus of the U.S. Department of Commerce.

These guides were developed by a Task Force composed of representatives of the various Bureaus of the U.S. Department of Commerce and the Office of the Secretary. Their background and experience reflects a variety of professional and technical specialties within the Department.

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Duties and Responsibilities of a Supervisor was the task assignment of Richard C. Pinkham, Patent Office.

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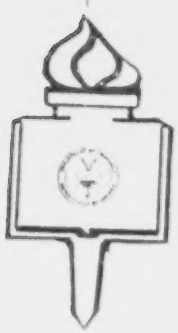

U. S. Department of Commerce

# COMMERCE SUPERVISORY COURSE

## SESSION I-2-4

## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

Office of the Secretary

U. S. Department of Commerce
Commerce Supervisory Course

SESSION I-2-4
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

*NOTES TO THE INSTRUCTOR*

TIME ALLOTTED: (1) 3 periods of 50 minutes each (45 minutes allotted to showing and discussing the film)
or
(2) 4 periods of 50 minutes each (95 minutes allotted to showing and extensively discussing the film)

HAND-OUTS (one per student unless otherwise noted):

1. The Supervisor's Responsibilities To Management (hand out during the first period of the session)

2. The Supervisor's Responsibilities To His Subordinates (hand out during the first period)

3. Steps In Decision Making (hand out during the first period)

4. The Problem-Solving Discussion Sequence (hand out during the second period)

5. General Rules For Conducting A Problem-Solving Discussion (hand out during the second period)

6. Case Study on Problem-Solving In Inter-Planetary Communication (hand out during the second period)

AIDS REQUIRED:

1. Overhead projector

2. Slides

    a. Slides depicting the supervisor's role and place

        1. "The Man In The Middle"

        2. "He No Longer Is Primarily A Technician"

        3. "He Has Increased Responsibility"

        4. "He Exercises Authority"

        5. "He Gets Work Done Through Others"

*NOTES TO THE INSTRUCTOR*

6. "He Is A Part Of The Management Staff"

b. "What The Supervisor Should Know About His Organization"

c. "The Supervisor's Responsibility To Other Work Units"

d. "Has The Supervisor Any Responsibilities To Himself?"

e. "Types of Decision-Making"

f. "General Rules For Conducting A Problem-Solving Discussion"

3. 16 mm. movie projector

4. Roundtable film "The Making Of A decision"

REFERENCES:

1. The Patent Office Employee Development Branch publication "Organization For Personnel Management" (April 1970)

2. The book "Management-Minded Supervision" (in particular Chapter 1 "Developing Management-Mindedness") by Bradford B. Boyd

3. The Patent Office Employee Development Branch publication "The Art of Supervision And The Role And Responsibilities Of The Supervisor" (May 1967)

4. "Responsibilities Of A Supervisor" - Air Force Publication 50-2-1

5. "The Supervision Of Personnel" by Pfiffner

6. "Training The Supervisor" USCSC Personnel Methods Series No. 4

7. "Responsibilities Of A Working Leader" - Air Force Publication 40-10-1

8. "The Role Of The Supervisor" - Army Civilian Personnel Pamphlet 41-B-1

9. LRI monograph "The Leader Looks At Decision-Making"

10. The book "Management-Minded Supervision" (in particular, Chapter 13 "Making Sound Decisions") by Bradford B. Boyd

11. The book "Managing Your Time" (pages 143-149) by Ted W. Engstrom and Alec Mackenzie

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*NOTES TO THE INSTRUCTOR*

12. From the book "Management: A Book of Readings" by Koontz and O'Donnell, Chapter 14 "The Environment of Decision" by Chester I. Barnard, and Chapter 15 "Basic Frameworks for Decisions" by Charles Z. Wilson and Marcus Alexis

13. "How To Solve Problems" - Air Force Publication 50-2-21

SESSION I-2-4
DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

OUTLINE OF THE SESSION

Objective: (1) To develop an appreciation of the first-line supervisor's job and his responsibilities to management, to his worker-subordinates, to his peers, and to himself; (2) to develop and improve the techniques for making decisions.

A. (5 minutes) A series of slides depicting the supervisor's role and place in the organization.

1. The Supervisor's job is different.

2. He no longer is primarily a technician.

3. He has increased responsibility.

4. He exercises authority.

5. He gets work done through others.

6. He is now a part of the management staff.

B. (3 minutes) A slide setting forth what the supervisor should know about his organization.

1. The mission of the Department of Commerce and each of the bureaus including his own.

2. The functions and responsibilities of his own group.

3. How his group contributes to the mission of his bureau and the Department.

4. The way in which each of his subordinates' jobs fits into the overall picture.

C. (25-30 minutes) A class discussion wherein the instructor elicits from individuals in the class their ideas on (1) the supervisor's responsibilities to management and (2) the supervisor's responsibilities to his subordinates.

D. (2 minutes) A slide enumerating the supervisor's responsibilities to other work units of the organization will be shown.

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OUTLINE OF THE SESSION

1. Share his knowledge regarding the work technology, the organization's policies and objectives, and supervisory techniques.

2. Cooperate in all work related matters such as sharing use of facilities, developing new procedures, and clarifying over-lapping responsibilities.

E. (3 minutes) A slide setting forth the supervisor's responsibilities to himself will be presented.

1. Do his job as well as he can.

2. Keep abreast of important organizational changes.

3. Develop a plan for his own self-improvement.

4. Follow through on his plan.

F. (5 minutes) The supervisor's duties and responsibilities will be summarized. Each student will be handed a sheet listing the supervisor's responsibilities to management. A similar sheet on the supervisor's responsibilities to his subordinates will also be handed out to each student.

G. (2 minutes) A slide describing the types of decision-making will be shown.

1. Solving a problem

   a. Existing problem

   b. Potential problem

2. Perceiving and acting on an opportunity

3. Decision not to do either of the above

H. (5 minutes) The instructor and class will discuss the handout "Steps In Decision-Making".

CLASS BREAK (5 - 10 MINUTES)

I. (15 minutes) Each student will be given a handout on the Problem-Solving Discussion Sequence, told to read the handout and

OUTLINE OF THE SESSION

to note any questions which he may have. The instructor will clarify for the class any questions which may arise.

J. (5 minutes) A slide setting forth some general rules for conducting a problem-solving discussion will be shown. Each student will then be given a handout corresponding to the material on the slide.

K. (30 minutes) A case study exercise on a problem-solving discussion will be handed out to each student who will study the case and answer in writing the questions which follow it.

CLASS BREAK (5 - 10 MINUTES)

L. (5-10 minutes) The class will discuss the answers to the questions on the case study exercise.

M. (45 minutes; alternatively 95 minutes including extensive class discussion) The Roundtable film "The Making Of A Decision" (35 minutes playing time) will be shown. At the end of the film, the class will break up into groups and discuss which supervisory candidate it thinks should have been selected, and why.

N. (5 minutes) Summary of Decision-Making

U. S. Department of Commerce
Commerce Supervisory Course

## SESSION I-2-4
## DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

### INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The purpose of this session is to develop an appreciation of the first-line supervisor's job and of his responsibilities to management, to his worker-subordinates, to his peers, and to himself. In particular, we shall study that portion of his job which involves the making of decisions. And since the most common way in which a first-line supervisor makes a decision in solving a problem is through a face-to-face discussion with a subordinate, we shall discuss the do's and don't's of such a problem-solving discussion. A case study exercise will be used to illustrate these do's and don't's. Finally, a movie film will bring out typical decision-making defects of supervisors and will show how these defects can hinder their job performance and jeopardize their own chances for promotion.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

SESSION: I-2-4 SUBJECT: DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

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| A. THE SUPERVISOR'S ROLE AND PLACE IN THE ORGANIZATION | A supervisor has a role and place in the organization which is different from that of the worker-employee. |
| 1. THE SUPERVISOR'S JOB IS DIFFERENT | |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G1 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G1 |
| | The supervisor is "the man in the middle". He is subject to pressures and expectations from <u>his</u> supervisor, from his subordinates, from staff personnel, and from his peers (other fellow supervisors). Oft-times these various pressures conflict with one another and the supervisor must resolve them as best as he can. |
| 2. HE NO LONGER IS PRIMARILY A TECHNICIAN | Though the supervisor may be a good technician, this is no longer his primary job. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G2 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G2 |
| | He now deals with <u>people</u> in assigning work and in evaluating their performance. |
| 3. HE HAS INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY | He is responsible <u>to</u> people above and below him as well as to the organization staff and his peers. He is responsible <u>for</u> the performance of his subordinates. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G3 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G3 |
| | In fact, he may feel that he is carrying the weight of the world on his shoulders. |
| 4. HE EXERCISES AUTHORITY | The first-line supervisor exercises <u>authority</u> over his subordinates. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G4 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G4 |

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| | The <u>way</u> in which he exercises this authority will influence both the morale and work product of his group. Needless to say, the supervisor should NOT exercise authority in the autocratic manner shown in this slide. |
| 5. HE GETS WORK DONE THROUGH OTHERS | Because the supervisor does not have the time, and may not have the ability, to do all the work himself, he must get work done through other people. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G5 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G5<br><br>The first letters of each of these words, when read down, spell MYTOP. Let MYTOP (Multiply Yourself Through Other People) be your watchword as a supervisor. |
| 6. HE IS NOW A PART OF THE MANAGEMENT STAFF | A first-line supervisor becomes a part of the management staff or team. The directors and other executives above him expect the first-line supervisor to be "management minded". |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G6 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G6 |
| B. WHAT THE SUPERVISOR SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HIS ORGANIZATION | A "management-minded" supervisor should know and understand these things about his organization. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G7 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G7 |
| C. THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO MANAGEMENT<br><br>(ELICIT THESE FROM THE STUDENTS AND LIST KEY WORDS ON THE CHALKBOARD) | In a previous session titled "Moving Up To A Supervisor", you learned various things that management expects of you.<br><br>What are some of these responsibilities that a supervisor has toward management?<br><br>(Record the key words of the answers on the chalkboard.)<br><br>(The possible responses are set forth in Handout I-2-4-H1.) |

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| D. THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO HIS SUBORDINATES | You also learned in that same session "Moving Up To A Supervisor", that a subordinate expects certain things from his supervisor. |
| (ELICIT THESE RESPONSIBILITIES FROM THE STUDENTS AND RECORD KEY WORDS ON THE CHALKBOARD) | What are some of these responsibilities that a supervisor has toward his subordinates?<br><br>(Record the key words of the answers on the chalkboard.)<br><br>(The possible responses are set forth in Handout I-2-4-H2.) |
| HAND OUT I-2-4-H1 and I-2-4-H2 | HAND OUT I-2-4-H1 AND I-2-4-H2 |
| E. THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO OTHER WORK UNITS | In addition to responsibilities to his boss and to his subordinates, a supervisor usually has certain responsibilities to work groups other than his own. For example, a bureau may have several work groups each doing generally the same work but assigned to its own geographical territory. Each of these territorial work groups would have its own supervisor. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G8 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G8 |
| F. THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO HIMSELF | There is one person to whom each supervisor has special responsibilities. That one person is himself. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G9 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G9 |
| G. SUMMARY OF THE SUPERVISOR'S DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES | We have pointed out that the supervisor is the man in the middle. He has responsibilities to management which responsibilities include understanding the organization, carrying out the policies of management, enhancing the image of the organization, and maintaining an acceptable quality and quantity of work in his group. |

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| | The supervisor also has responsibilities to his worker subordinates. These responsibilities include training and developing subordinates, being fair, being tactful, and being interested in the needs and problems of these subordinates.<br><br>A supervisor has the additional responsibility of cooperating with other work units of the organization.<br><br>Finally, a supervisor owes <u>to</u> <u>himself</u> the effort to do his job as well as he can, and to devise and follow through on a plan for his self-improvement. |
| H. THE TYPES OF DECISION-MAKING | We will now begin a discussion of what is possibly the most important duty of a supervisor: decision-making. As this slide will indicate, there are several different types of decision-making. |
| SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G10 | SHOW GRAPHIC I-2-4-G10 |
| I. STEPS IN DECISION-MAKING | To help us understand the proper approach to making decisions, it is useful to break the decision-making process down into a series of steps. |
| HAND OUT I-2-4-H3 | HAND OUT I-2-4-H3<br><br>(Work through the above handout with the class, and summarize the 7 main steps for emphasis. Answer any questions which the students may have on the handout.) |
| CLASS BREAK (5-10 MINUTES) | CLASS BREAK (5-10 MINUTES) |
| J. THE PROBLEM-SOLVING DISCUSSION SEQUENCE | First-line supervisors most often solve existing problems on the spot as they arise. For example, a subordinate may ask his supervisor for help, or the supervisor may himself notice that the |

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| | subordinate needs help. In these on-the-spot situations, there is usually a face-to-face discussion between the supervisor and his subordinate. Such a problem-solving discussion does require the several steps in decision making that were previously discussed in the handout; but because of the direct personal relationship, an approach somewhat different from the usual steps in decision making, should be used. This approach is set forth in the following handout. |
| HAND OUT I-2-4-H4 | HAND OUT I-2-4-H4<br><br>(The class will read the handout and the instructor will answer any questions which may arise.) |
| K. GENERAL RULES FOR CONDUCTING A PROBLEM-SOLVING DISCUSSION | Besides the actual steps that should make up a problem-solving discussion, there are some general rules that can be applied in order to improve our own ability to solve problems by means of a discussion. |
| SHOW GRAPHICS I-2-4-G11 | SHOW GRAPHICS I-2-4-G11<br><br>(Tell the students that these same rules are on a handout which will be given them, and therefore they need not take notes on this slide.) |
| HAND OUT I-2-4-H5 | HAND OUT I-2-4-H5 |
| L. CASE STUDY EXERCISE ON A PROBLEM-SOLVING DISCUSSION | Now that we have discussed the steps in the general decision-making process, and have considered how a face-to-face discussion for solving a problem should be conducted, we are ready to try our hand in a problem-solving exercise. I will hand each of you a copy of a problem-solving discussion on "Inter-Planetary Communication" that might be occurring in a Commerce Department agency in the year 1985. |

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| HAND OUT I-2-4-H6 | HAND OUT I-2-4-H6<br><br>Before you start to read the exercise, please look at the back sheet. On it are included 3 questions. Read these questions and then go back to the first page and follow the Instructions. It will probably take about 25 minutes to read the story and answer in writing the 3 questions on the last page. In answering the questions, you may want to consult your handouts on "The Problem-Solving Discussion Sequence" and "General Rules for Conducting A Problem-Solving Discussion".<br><br>(At the end of 25 minutes times, a class break may be taken.) |
| CLASS BREAK (5-10 minutes) | CLASS BREAK (5-10 MINUTES) |
| M. DISCUSS ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS IN THE CASE STUDY | Now that most of you have answered the questions on the "Inter-Planetary Communication" case, let's see if we all agree on the answers. (Elicit from the class members their answers to the questions, and add any of the answers below which have not been brought out.) |
| 1. THE ANSWER TO THE FIRST QUESTION | The answer to the first question is: The subordinate referred the problem to her supervisor. |
| 2. POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO THE SECOND QUESTION | Possible answers to the second question concerning Module's use of proper technique:<br><br>1. He used the general question "What seems to be the problem?" (top page 2).<br><br>2. He tactfully disagreed with Jett when he said "That's true but let's talk about this some more because..." (middle page 2). |

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| | 3. He proceeded to more specific questions concerning the possible inside causes of working conditions, layout, equipment, and procedure (bottom page 2 and top page 3).<br><br>4. He stated the real problem as being the usual Alfred E. Neuman mailing accompanied by an increasing number of requests for pollution statistics (bottom page 3).<br><br>5. He stated the limitations or restrictions on the solution as being (a) a lack of money to hire additional help, and (b) a pending bill requiring prompt answering of inquiries (top page 4).<br><br>6. He developed (with Jett's help) and evaluated the alternative solution of Jett's working overtime (middle page 4).<br><br>7. He made the decision: "It seems to me the best approach is ..." (bottom page 4).<br><br>8. He stated the plan for action (top page 5).<br><br>9. He restated the plan for action (middle page 5). |
| 3. POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO THE THIRD QUESTION | Possible answers to the third question concerning Module's failure to follow the proper procedure:<br><br>1. He was rude when he said "Whadda ya want?" at the beginning of the discussion (middle page 1).<br><br>2. He was also rude in interrupting Jett when she started to suggest a solution "Well, we could ..." (middle page 4). |

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| | 3. He failed to take emergency action when it was needed (bottom half page 1).<br><br>4. He discussed the problem at an inappropriate time and place - at the "Gator Ade" break and in the presence of Nose E. Bowie (pages 2 and 3).<br><br>5. He failed to thank Jett for her help.<br><br>6. He failed to comment to Jett on the usefulness of the discussion.<br><br>7. Apparently, he failed to self-critique the discussion. |
| N. SHOW THE ROUNDTABLE FILM "MAKING OF A DECISION | We will now look at a film titled "The Making Of A Decision". As you watch the film during its 35 minutes of playing time, try to decide which one of the three supervisory candidates should have been selected, and why.<br><br>(At the end of the film, the class will be divided into groups, each group will decide which candidate it thinks should have been selected, and why, and report its conclusions to the class.) |
| (ALTERNATIVE USE OF THE FILM IN A 4-HOUR, RATHER THAN A 3-HOUR, SESSION) | (ALTERNATIVE USE OF THE FILM IN A 4-HOUR, RATHER THAN A 3-HOUR, SESSION) |
| AFTER 20 MINUTES, STOP FILM AND ASK QUESTION ON STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES IN DECISION MAKING | About two-thirds of the way through the film (after about 20 minutes), ask the class: "What do you see as each man's strengths and weaknesses in decision making?" Stop the projector at the fade-out and put this question to the class. Responses can be listed on the chalkboard as follows: |

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| ASK SPECIFIC QUESTIONS ON TOM, MAX AND JASON | Tom Max Jason<br><br>Strengths<br><br>Weaknesses<br><br>Involve the class members in a discussion of the following questions concerning Tom Petit, Max Bernhardt, and Jason Carpenter.<br><br>A. QUESTIONS CONCERNING TOM PETIT<br><br>Tom has to pick a machine to replace the X300. The new machine must meet his own needs as well as those of other department heads.<br><br>1. Tom seems to pride himself on being a perfectionist. How does his perfectionism influence his decision making?<br><br>2. Why do you think Tom is a perfectionist? Is it a cover-up for a weakness?<br><br>3. Should Tom "settle for less", or do compromise choices usually cost more in the long run?<br><br>4. How has Tom defined his objectives? Are they realistic?<br><br>5. Does he need all the data he is gathering? How can a manager know when to stop getting more opinions and/or facts?<br><br>6. Is he considering all the alternatives? Is there anything wrong with the way he does this? Is there such a thing as having too many?<br><br>7. What do you think of the way he calculates the risks? How much risk can be eliminated from management decisions? |

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| | 8. What do you think of the way he makes decisions and follows through? What do you think his "batting average" would be? |
| | B. QUESTIONS CONCERNING MAX BERNHARDT |
| | Max selects a man for a state college course. He also decides (on the phone) not to replace some equipment. |
| | 1. Max sends someone he knows and trusts to school. Why? What criteria would you use? |
| | 2. He is unwilling to take a risk on new equipment. Why? How should he have decided? |
| | 3. How does Max define his objectives? What influenced his choice? |
| | 4. What characterizes his information gathering procedures? Is it a good idea to get opinions from friends and associates? |
| | 5. Does he develop alternatives sufficiently? What could he have done to develop more? |
| | 6. In what way is he weak or strong at calculating the risks? |
| | 7. What do you think of the way he made the decision and followed it through? What do you think of his "trade-offs"? |
| (CLASS BREAK) | (CLASS BREAK) |

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| | C. QUESTIONS CONCERNING JASON CARPENTER<br><br>Jason is asked to redesign a computer report that is used by a number of managers.<br><br>1. Why didn't Jason call a conference or talk to the man who designed the old report?<br><br>2. He seems to feel getting opinions would make him look weak and waste time. Do you agree this is usually the case?<br><br>3. How did Jason define his objectives? Did he sacrifice any needlessly?<br><br>4. What characterized his gathering of data? How do you think he could have gotten more?<br><br>5. Was he strong or weak at developing alternatives? Was he neglecting any?<br><br>6. How do you feel he went about calculating the risks? In what way was he trying to play safe?<br><br>7. What do you think of the way he made the decision and followed through? What would be his "batting average?: |
| SHOW REMAINDER OF FILM | Show the remainder of the film (10 minutes). |
| ASK QUESTION ON HOW TOM, MAX AND JASON COULD IMPROVE | Discuss the following question with the class as a group:<br><br>If you are like Jason Carpenter, and jump to conclusions too often--<br><br>or, like Tom Petit and find yourself procrastinating because there are no perfect answers-- |

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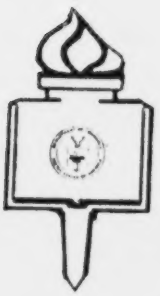
| | or, like Max Bernhardt, letting your own feelings influence your objectivity and judgement, what would you do to improve? |
| ASK QUESTIONS AS TO WHOM JOHN SHOULD SELECT, WHY, HOW SHOULD HE FOLLOW THROUGH | Then pose the following questions to the class, writing them on the chalkboard:<br><br>If you were John Reardon and had to make this choice tomorrow, whom would you pick? Why? And how would you follow through?<br><br>Divide the class into groups; each group will decide what it thinks are the best answers to the questions and will report its conclusions to the class. |

## SUMMARY

You, as supervisors, can usually make effective decisions if you first, define the problem involved; second, gather the pertinent facts; third, consider the alternative courses of action; fourth, make the decision wherein you select one of the alternatives or the best parts of several alternatives; fifth, take steps to see that the decision is carried out; and finally, follow through to see if the selected alternative is actually solving the problem. These are the general steps in effective decision making.

When you are discussing a problem face to face with a subordinate, you should keep in mind these general steps. But in addition, you should try to encourage your subordinate to state his ideas on the cause of the problem and any possible solutions for it. Make sure that the subordinate understands his part in the action to be taken. And don't forget to thank him for his help. Finally, after the discussion has ended, it is helpful to critique yourself to see how that discussion has affected your relationship with the subordinate, and to decide on your own follow-up by way of communications to those people affected, arranging any additional training needed; and any needed changes in material, equipment, procedures, and organization.



U. S. Department of Commerce

# COMMERCE SUPERVISORY COURSE

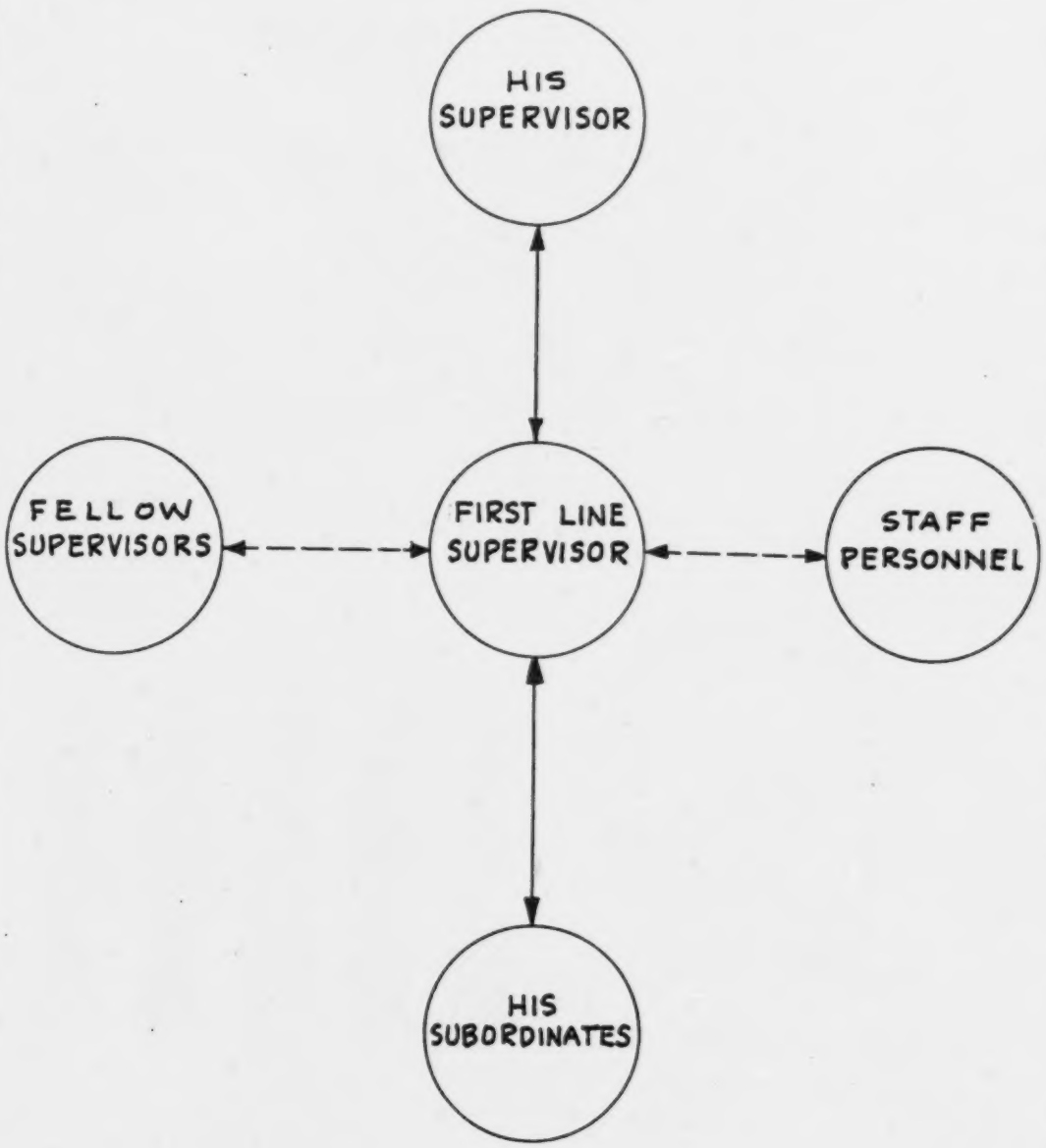
SESSION I-2-4

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

**GRAPHICS**

GRAPHICS I-2-4-G1

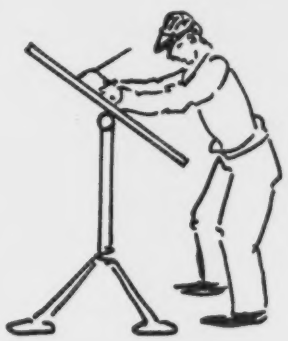
# THE SUPERVISOR'S JOB IS DIFFERENT - HE IS NOW "THE MAN IN THE MIDDLE"



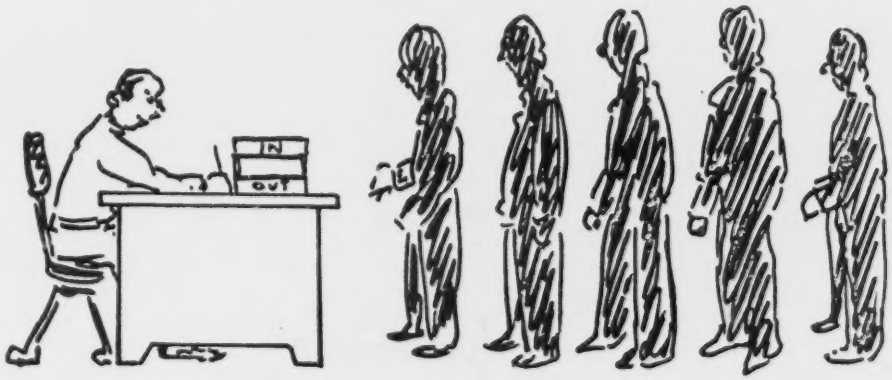
GRAPHICS I-2-4-G2

# HE NO LONGER IS PRIMARILY A TECHNICIAN

HE MAY HAVE BEEN THIS



HE NOW MAY BE THIS

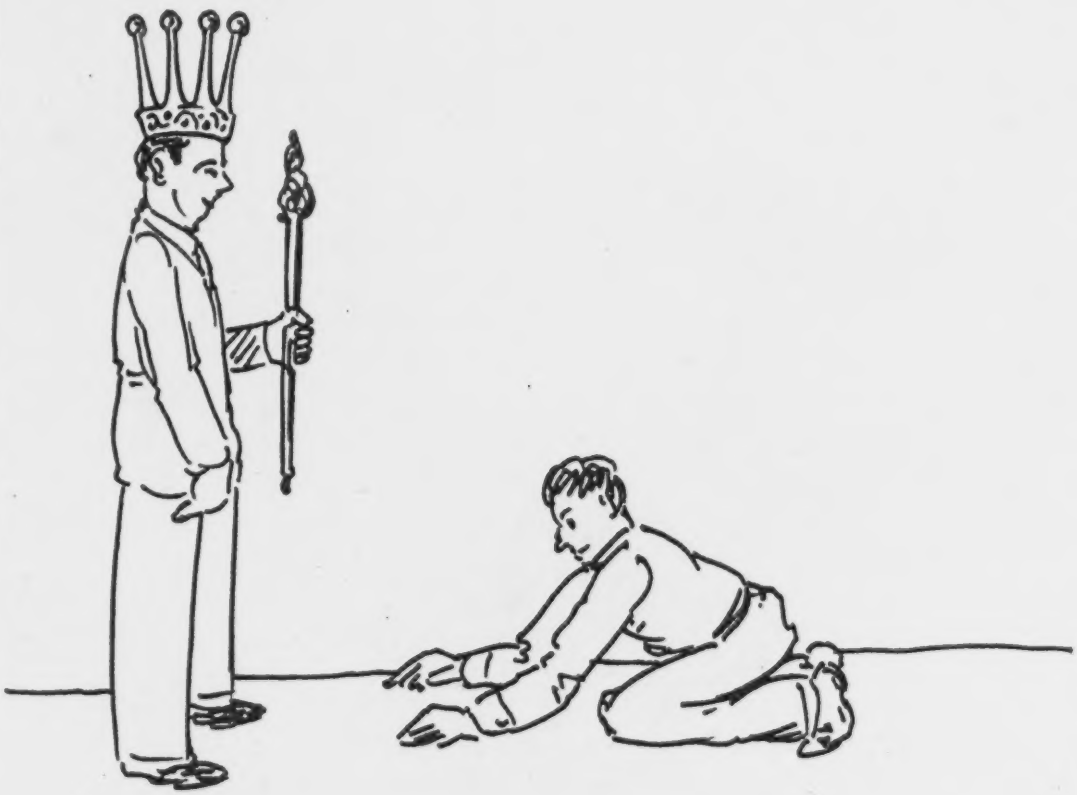


GRAPHICS I-2-4-G3

# HE HAS INCREASED RESPONSIBILITY

GRAPHICS I-2-4-G4

# HE EXERCISES AUTHORITY



GRAPHICS I-2-4-G5

HE GETS WORK DONE THROUGH OTHERS

MULTIPLY

YOURSELF

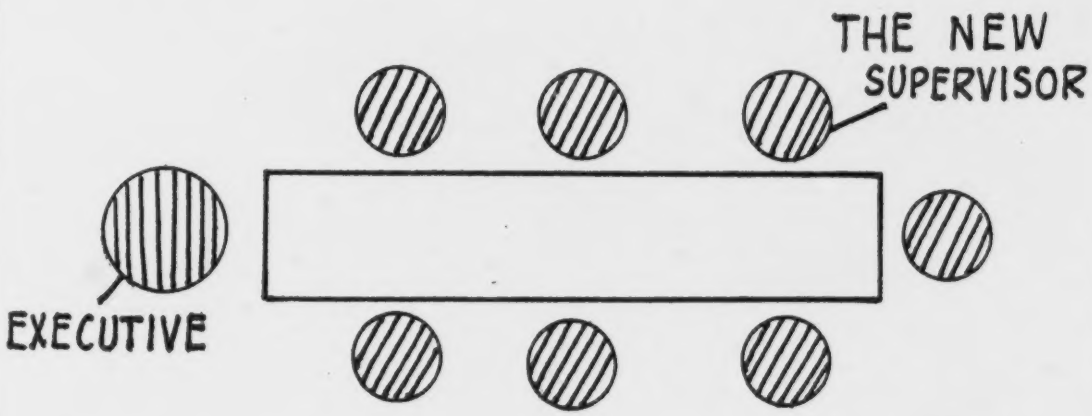
THROUGH

OTHER

PEOPLE

GRAPHICS I-2-4-G6

# HE IS NOW A PART OF THE MANAGEMENT STAFF



GRAPHICS I-2-4-G7

# WHAT THE SUPERVISOR SHOULD KNOW ABOUT HIS ORGANIZATION

1. THE MISSION OF THE DEPT. OF COMMERCE AND OF EACH BUREAU INCLUDING HIS OWN

2. THE FUNCTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF HIS OWN GROUP

3. HOW HIS GROUP CONTRIBUTES TO THE MISSION OF HIS BUREAU AND OF THE DEPARTMENT

4. HOW EACH OF HIS SUBORDINATES' JOBS FITS INTO THE OVERALL PICTURE

GRAPHICS I-2-4-G8

# THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO OTHER WORK UNITS

1. SHARE HIS KNOWLEDGE
   - a. WORK TECHNOLOGY
   - b. ORGANIZATION POLICY AND OBJECTIVES
   - c. SUPERVISORY TECHNIQUES

2. COOPERATE IN WORK-RELATED MATTERS
   - a. SHARING USE OF FACILITIES
   - b. DEVELOPING NEW PROCEDURES
   - c. CLARIFYING OVERLAPPING RESPONSIBILITIES

GRAPHICS I-2-4-G9

HAS THE SUPERVISOR ANY RESPONSIBILITIES TO HIMSELF?

1. DO HIS JOB AS WELL AS HE CAN

2. KEEP UP WITH IMPORTANT ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGES

3. SELF IMPROVEMENT
   a. DEVELOP A PLAN
   b. FOLLOW THROUGH WITH THIS PLAN

GRAPHICS I-2-4-G10

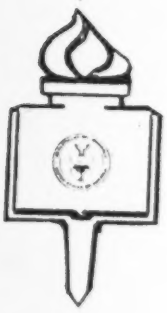
# TYPES OF DECISIONS

1. SOLVING A PROBLEM
   a. EXISTING
   b. POTENTIAL
2. PERCEIVING & ACTING ON AN OPPORTUNITY
3. DECIDING NOT TO DO EITHER OF THE ABOVE

GRAPHICS I-2-4-G-11

# GENERAL RULES FOR PROBLEM-SOLVING DISCUSSION

1. SUBORDINATE'S IDEAS FIRST
2. ACKNOWLEDGE & COMPLIMENT
3. GENERAL QUESTIONS FIRST
4. VERIFY WHAT IS SAID BY:
   a. PARAPHRASING
   b. PARTIAL PARAPHRASING
   c. SUMMARIZING
5. OBSERVE AS WELL AS HEAR
6. USE TACT IN INTRODUCING CONFLICTING INFORMATION
7. SUPERVISOR HAS FINAL SAY
8. DO NOT TRY FOR 100 % PERFECTION



U. S. Department of Commerce

# COMMERCE SUPERVISORY COURSE

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SESSION I-2-4

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF A SUPERVISOR

**HANDOUTS**

HANDOUT I-2-4-H1

## THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO MANAGEMENT

1. Develop an understanding of his organization.
2. Know and carry out the policies of management.
3. Enhance the image of the organization.
4. Originate and implement ideas for improving efficiency and service to public.
5. Determine the number and types of workers needed in his group.
6. Evaluate subordinates.
7. Develop subordinates.
8. Reward subordinates.
9. Develop in himself and his group an adaptability to change.
10. Develop himself.
11. Plan, assign, and coordinate work.
12. Meet schedules and deadlines.
13. Maintain quality of work done.
14. Maintain acceptable quantity of work done.
15. Keep costs down.
16. Build and maintain high morale in his work group.
17. Serve as a communications link, up and down.
18. Maintain discipline.
19. Set a good example.
20. Minimize risks and hazards in the work area.
21. Keep necessary records.
22. Prepare necessary reports.

HANDOUT I-2-4-H2

## THE SUPERVISOR'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO HIS SUBORDINATES

1. Train and develop subordinates.
2. Insofar as possible, assign work to best utilize each man's abilities, skills, and interest.
3. With subordinate's participation, develop quality and quantity standards for the job.
4. Be sensitive to, and interested in, the needs and problems of his subordinates.
5. Treat all subordinates fairly.
6. Stand up for one's subordinates.
7. Maintain an open, friendly relationship with each subordinate.
8. Be tactful.
9. Maintain harmony in the work group.
10. Set a good example.
11. Show each man how his job fits into the overall picture.
12. Evaluate and appraise performance in a continuing manner.
13. Serve as a communications link, up and down.
14. Provide good working conditions, i.e., space, equipment and materials.
15. Minimize risks and hazards in the work area.

HANDOUT I-2-4-H3

## STEPS IN DECISION MAKING

1. Define the problem
2. Gather data (only what is necessary)
   a. Inside factors affecting the problem
      (1) Working conditions
      (2) Equipment
      (3) Procedures
      (4) Employees
         (a) Attitude
         (b) Ability
         (c) Training
   b. Pertinent conditions outside the organization
      (1) Competition
      (2) Business climate
   c. Restrictions on possible action
      (1) Cost
      (2) Quality standards
      (3) Quantity standards
      (4) Delivery schedules
      (5) Other commitments of the work unit
      (6) Effect on other work units
      (7) Effect on organizational image
      (8) Company policy

HANDOUT I-2-4-H3

(9) Should set a desirable precedent

3. Develop alternatives

4. Evaluate each alternative

5. Make the decision, choosing one alternative or best parts of several

6. Implement the decision

   a. Changes in organization needed?

   b. Changes in procedures needed?

   c. Changes in equipment or materials?

   d. Additional training needed?

   e. Communication to all employees affected

7. Follow through

   a. Is the selected alternative succeeding in solving the problem?

   b. Refine the decision if necessary

HANDOUT I-2-4-H4

# THE PROBLEM-SOLVING DISCUSSION SEQUENCE

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

1. How the problem is recognized
   a. Supervisor's own initiative
   b. Directions from a superior
   c. Case referred by a subordinate
2. The steps
   a. Greeting - be relaxed but skip the small talk
   b. Statement of the symptoms of the problem (by supervisor and/or subordinate)
   c. Should the discussion continue at this point?
      (1) Is emergency action required?
      (2) Are the people, time, and place appropriate?

Gather Data

## ANALYZING THE PROBLEM

1. The supervisor asks, "What seems to be the problem?" or an equivalent general question?
2. The supervisor asks, "What other factors might affect the situation?"
3. The supervisor concludes, "Then the real problem is...."

DEFINE THE PROBLEM

HANDOUT I-2-4-H4

4. Should the discussion continue at this point?

   a. Is emergency action required?

   b. Are the people, time, and place appropriate?

SEEKING THE SOLUTION

GATHER DATA

1. The supervisor says, "The restrictions on the solution are..."

   a. Cost

   b. Company policy

   c. Effect on other work units

   d. Other commitments of the work unit

   e. Quality standards

   f. Quanity standards

   g. Delivery schedules

   h. Should set a desirable precedent

   i. Effect on organizational image

DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES

2. The supervisor asks, "What do you think we should do?"

EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES

3. Evaluate the first suggestion

   a. The supervisor asks, "Would that help or not help?"

      (1) Cost

      (2) Effect on production

      (3) Will it help our department?

      (4) Will it help our organization as a whole?

HANDOUT I-2-4-H4

b. The supervisor also asks, "What new problems might that create?"

(1) How will it affect other people or departments?

(2) Will it set a desirable precedent?

DEVELOP ALTERNATIVES

4. The supervisor asks, "What else might we do?"

EVALUATE ALTERNATIVES

5. Evaluate the second suggestion like the first.

6. Lastly, the supervisor may provide a suggestion.

7. The goal may require revision if the problem cannot be solved.

MAKE THE DECISION

8. The supervisor concludes, "Then the best overall approach is..."

IMPLEMENT THE DECISION

9. The supervisor states a specific plan for action:

a. What the subordinate should do and when he should do it.

b. What the supervisor should do and when he should do it.

10. The supervisor asks, "Can you do that?"

11. Restatement of the plan for action:

a. Supervisor states his part of the action plan first.

b. Supervisor asks the subordinate to state his part of the plan, e.g., "I'm going to do...on ... and you will do ....".

CONCLUDING THE DISCUSSION

L. Closing

a. Comment on the usefulness of the discussion.

b. Thank the subordinate for his help.

HANDOUT I-2-4-H4

2. Self-critique by the supervisor

   a. What effect did this discussion have on my relationship with this subordinate?

   b. What did I learn from this discussion?

   c. What should I do next?

   d. What follow up is needed?

      (1) Changes in material, equipment, procedures, organization

      (2) Additional training

      (3) Communication to all affected

HANDOUT I-2-4-H5

## GENERAL RULES FOR CONDUCTING A PROBLEM-SOLVING DISCUSSION

1. The superior should give the subordinate the chance to offer his information and ideas first.

2. Encourage the subordinate by acknowledging his comments and by complimenting him on them if appropriate.

3. The supervisor should start with general questions (to avoid unduly restricting the area of discussion); he may go on to specific questions if particular information is needed.

4. Verify one's understanding of what the subordinate has said by:
   a. Paraphrasing
   b. Partial paraphrasing
   c. Summarizing

5. Observe how (tone of voice, facial expressions and gestures) as well as what the subordinate says.

6. Be tactful in introducing information which conflicts with what the subordinate has just said, e.g., "Let's talk some more about that because the latest Dept. of Labor statistics show...."

7. The superior should always have the final say on the topic.

8. Time limitations do not permit 100% perfection.

HANDOUT I-2-4-H6

# CASE STUDY ON PROBLEM-SOLVING IN "INTER-PLANETARY COMMUNICATION"

INSTRUCTIONS:

First, read all the way through the following case story. Next, answer in writing the questions which follow the story. If time permits, the class will orally discuss possible answers to the questions.

Mr. Module is director of the Jupiter Division of HIPPY, the Health Institute for Polemic Parents and Youth, a bureau of the United States Department of Commerce.

One afternoon at 1:30 I.S.T. (Interstellar Time), Mr. Module's secretary, Miss Jett Kraft, knocks on his office door.

Mr. Module:
"Whadda ya want?"

Jett opens the door timidly:

"I've got a problem, Mr. Module. You remember that letter you e. s. p'd to me the other day for Mr. Gantry. I was just starting to type it when I noticed that his letter to us says he needs the statistical information right away. He says he needs it by 1:45 I.S.T. today for presentation to an anti-smog symposium sponsored by JIVE (the Jupiter Institute for a Vivified Environment). And I was just now starting to type the letter."

Mr. Module:
"Holy Compass! Hasn't that letter gone out yet?"

Jett:
"Negative".

Mr. Module:
"Never mind, Jett. We'll discuss the problem further at our usual 'Gator Ade' break. That will give me time to listen to these last five minutes of the finals of the Intergallactic Mercury Cup soccer matches."

HANDOUT I-2-4-H6

(At 2:00 I.S.T., Jett and Mr. Module are drinking dehydrated 'Gator Ade' in the snack bar. They are joined by a mutual acquaintance, Nose E. Bowie, who is a management analyst in the Office of the Secretary of Commerce.)

Mr. Module:
"Jett, I'm glad you brought that letter to my attention. You know, lately it's been three or four days before I get the letters I've e. s. p'd back for my signature. What seems to be the problem?"

Jett:
"I know it's taking me longer but I've had so much to do lately. There's the special Alfred E. Neumann birthday celebration mailing and we seem to get more information requests that ever before."

Mr. Module:
"That's true but let's talk about this some more because you went through the Alfred E. Neumann birthday celebration last year without any delay in the letters, and I don't see how this year was any different."

Jett:
"Well, all the Neumann mailing nearly drove me mad and, besides that, we are getting many more requests this year for statistics on pollution."

Mr. Module:
"How many more pollution requests are we getting each day?"

Jett:
"The computer says we're getting 17.64 more each day than last year."

Mr. Module:
"Is there anything about the working conditions or layout that may be slowing you down?"

HANDOUT I-2-4-H6

Jett:
"I don't think so."

Mr. Module:
"Have you had any trouble with equipment? I know your e.s.p. recorder is rather old."

Jett:
"The e.s.p. selectivity control has been fixed and it no longer has any trouble distinquishing your thought waves from those of Mr. Padd."

Mr. Module:
"So that's not a factor. Is there anything in our procedure for handling pollution inquiries that's slowing you down?"

Jett:
"Maybe so. Most of the statistics you project say about the same thing. I spend a lot of time typing the same old jazz.

Mr. Module:
"Then the real problem is that you have the usual Alfred E. Neumann mailing as well as an increasing number of requests for information on pollution satistics. Let's get together again tomorrow with our old buddy, Nose E. Bowie, at 'Gator Ade' time."

(Next day the same parties are drinking dehydrated "Gator Aid" in the snack bar.)

Nose E. Bowie:
"Urp."

HANDOUT I-2-4-H6

Mr. Module:
"As I started to say yesterday, we are ready to think about a solution. But there are some restrictions or limitations on the solution. First, we are, as usual, operating under a continuing resolution and therefore do not yet have enough money to hire any additional help. Secondly, Senator J. Pine Apple of Puerto Rico has just introduced a bill, which is sure to pass, making it mandatory for all government agencies to answer outside requests for information promptly within three weeks. Jett, what do you think we should do."

Jett:
"I could work overtime."

Mr. Module:
"That's a good thought but would it help you? You could not be paid any money for it because you salary is already at a regular biweekly rate which is so high that overtime would put you above the permissible biweekly maximum. What else might we do?"

Jett:
"Well, we could ..."

Mr. Module (interrupting):
"Why didn't you think of this? We can run off form letters on the pollution statistics and you can mail them out."

Jett:
"Humph! They wouldn't look as nice as my typed letters but I guess they would do the job."

Mr. Module:
"Jett, sometimes you are too set in your ways. It seems to me that the best approach is to develop a form letter to cut down on the number of letters that you have to type."

HANDOUT I-2-4-H6

Mr. M. continues:
"How can we carry out these ideas? I'll contact the Government Printing Office and see how long it will take to print up three million form letters HIPPY - 301 JD. If you draft a form letter we can go over it tomorrow morning at 9:00 I.S.T. Can you do that?"

Jett:
"Roger."

Mr. Module:
"To be sure we both understand, I'll contact the G.P.O. this afternoon and check the lead time needed to print three million forms. And what will you do, Jett?"

Jett:
"I'll draft a form letter and meet with you tomorrow morning at 9:00 I.S.T. to discuss it."

Mr. Module:
"That's great! Good-bye."

HANDOUT I-2-4-H6

QUESTIONS:

How was the problem recognized in the "Inter-Planetary Communication" case study?

List 3 specific examples of Mr. Module"s proper following of the "Problem - Solving Discussion Sequence" procedure:

1.

2.

3.

List 3 specific examples of Mr. Module's failure to follow the "Problem - Solving Discussion Sequence" procedure:

1.

2.

3..

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